

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-16 (canceled)

1 Claim 17 (currently amended): The dock leveller recited in
2 claim ~~16~~32 wherein the transmission member comprises a stiff
3 element which is ~~pivotably~~pivotally connected with the lip and
4 the platform.

1 Claim 18 (previously presented): The dock leveller recited in
2 claim 17 wherein the stiff element comprises a variable length
3 element for pivoting a front edge of the lip relative to a rear
4 edge of the lip connected with the pivot element.

1 Claim 19 (previously presented): The dock leveller recited in
2 claim 18 wherein the variable length element comprises a pneumatic
3 or hydraulic cylinder.

1 Claim 20 (currently amended): The dock leveller recited in
2 claim ~~16~~32 wherein the ~~pivot element~~lip hinge has an upper
3 surface which is contiguous to both the lip upper surface and the
4 deck upper surface.

Claim 21 (canceled)

1 Claim 22 (currently amended): The dock leveller recited in
2 claim ~~21~~20 wherein:

3 the lip upper surface forms at least a portion of an outer
4 surface of a cylinder; and

5 a longitudinal axis of the cylinder coincides with the
6 ~~rotation~~lip hinge pivotal axis.

1 Claim 23 (currently amended): The dock leveller recited in
2 claim 22 wherein the ~~pivot element~~lip hinge comprises a hinge
3 element of elastically deformable material.

1 Claim 24 (currently amended): The dock leveller recited in
2 claim 20 wherein the ~~pivot element~~lip hinge comprises a hinge
3 element of elastically deformable material.

1 Claim 25 (currently amended): The dock leveller recited in
2 claim ~~21~~32 wherein the ~~pivot element~~extension hinge comprises a
3 ~~hinge element of an~~ elastically deformable material.

Claims 26 and 27 (canceled)

1 Claim 28 (currently amended): The dock leveller recited in
2 claim ~~16-32~~ wherein the lip upper surface slopes down from the
3 deck plate to a front end of the lip and, in operation, is held at
4 an angle relative to the platform, the angle being less than
5 approximately 2 degrees.

1 Claim 29 (canceled)

1 Claim 30 (currently amended): The dock leveller recited in
2 claim ~~16-32~~ further comprising an extension hinge construction,
3 which is connected with an end of the deck plate remote from the
4 lip, and is connectible with an edge of the platform.

1 Claim 31 (previously presented): The dock leveller recited in
2 claim 30 wherein the extension hinge construction comprises:
3 the deck plate;
4 a supporting device for operatively supporting the end of
5 the deck plate, remote from the lip, on the platform edge; and
6 a rotation element supported by the supporting device and
7 situated near the platform edge, the end of the deck plate remote
8 from the lip being at least partly supported by the rotation
9 element, and the deck plate being movable relative to the rotation
10 element.

1 Claim 32 (new): A dock leveller comprising:
2 a platform;
3 a frame adjoining the platform, the frame having an
4 extension hinge for pivotal movement along an axis;
5 a deck coupled to the extension hinge having a deck plate
6 with a deck upper surface that defines a range of pivotal motion
7 relative to the platform;
8 a lip having a lip upper surface, the lip upper surface and
9 the deck upper surface forming at least a part of a transport path
10 with at least a portion of the platform;
11 a lip hinge coupled to the lip and the deck for relative
12 pivotal movement of the respective lip and deck upper surfaces
13 along another axis; and
14 a transmission member coupled to the lip for orienting the
15 lip upper surface at a substantially fixed angle with respect to
16 the platform throughout the deck upper surface pivotal range.

1 Claim 33 (new): The dock leveller recited in claim 32 wherein the
2 maximum overall relative pivoting range of the respective lip and
3 deck upper surfaces is approximately 14 degrees.

1 Claim 34 (new): The dock leveller recited in claim 32, wherein the
2 deck upper surface operative pivoting range relative to the
3 platform is no more than approximately 7.5 degrees.

1 Claim 35 (new): The dock leveller recited in claim 32, wherein the
2 deck upper surface pivoting range includes declination relative to
3 the platform, so that the deck plate is capable of establishing a
4 downwardly sloping transport path from the platform to the lip
5 upper surface.

1 Claim 36 (new): A dock leveller comprising:

2 a frame having an extension hinge for pivotal movement along
3 a first axis and a first pivot connection defining a second
4 axis, the respective axes oriented at a first spacing there
5 between;

6 a deck coupled to the extension hinge having a deck plate
7 with a deck upper surface;

8 a lip having a lip upper surface, the lip upper surface and
9 the deck upper surface forming a least a part of a transport
10 path;

11 a lip hinge coupled to the lip and the deck for relative
12 pivotal movement of the respective lip and deck upper surfaces
13 along a third axis that is oriented a second spacing from the
14 first axis;

15 a second pivot connection operatively coupled to the lip and
16 defining a fourth axis that is oriented with respect to the lip
17 hinge second axis identical to the first spacing; and

18 a transmission member pivotally coupled to the first and
19 second pivot connections, establishing an operable spacing between
20 the third and fourth axes that is identical to the second spacing
21 in at least one mode of operation, so that the four respective
22 axes define vertices of a parallelogram.

1 Claim 37 (new): The dock leveller recited in claim 36 wherein the
2 maximum overall relative pivoting range of the respective lip and
3 deck upper surfaces is approximately 14 degrees.

1 Claim 38 (new): The dock leveller of claim 36, wherein the deck
2 upper surface operative pivoting range relative to the platform is
3 no more than approximately 7.5 degrees.

1 Claim 39 (new): The dock leveller recited in claim 36 wherein the
2 stiff element comprises a variable length element.

1 Claim 40 (new): The dock leveller recited in claim 39 wherein the
2 variable length element comprises a pressurized fluid cylinder.

1 Claim 41 (new): The dock leveller recited in claim 36 wherein the
2 lip hinge comprises an elastically deformable material.

1 Claim 42 (new): The dock leveller recited in claim 36 wherein the
2 extension hinge comprises an elastically deformable material.

1 Claim 43 (new): A method for operating a dock leveller that is
2 coupled to a platform, wherein the dock leveller has a deck
3 pivotally coupled thereto, the deck having a deck upper surface
4 that defines a range of pivotal motion relative to the platform,
5 a lip having a lip upper surface, the lip pivotally coupled to
6 the deck for relative pivotal movement of the respective lip and
7 deck upper surfaces, the lip upper surface and the deck upper
8 surface forming a least a part of a transport path with at least
9 a portion of the platform; and a transmission member coupled to
10 the lip for orienting the lip upper surface, the method
11 comprising:

12 pivoting the deck plate relative to the platform and
13 manipulating the transmission member for maintaining a generally
14 constant lip upper surface orientation angle with respect to said
15 portion of the platform throughout the deck upper surface pivotal
16 range.

1 Claim 44 (new): The method of claim 43 further comprising
2 additional transmission member manipulation for selective
3 repositioning of the lip upper surface relative to the deck upper
4 surface.

1 Claim 45 (new): The method of claim 43, wherein the maximum
2 overall relative pivoting range of the respective lip and deck
3 upper surfaces is approximately 14 degrees.

1 Claim 46 (new): The method of claim 43, wherein the deck upper
2 surface operative pivoting range relative to the platform is no
3 more than approximately 7.5 degrees.

1 Claim 47 (new): The method of claim 43, further comprising
2 declinating the deck upper surface relative to the platform, so
3 that the deck plate is capable of establishing a downwardly
4 sloping transport path from the platform to the lip upper surface.

1 Claim 48 (new): The method of claim 43, wherein at least a part of
2 the platform within the transport path is generally horizontal and
3 the lip upper surface orientation relative to said part of the
4 platform is within 2 degrees throughout the deck upper surface
5 pivotal range.